

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INK PRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the Blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

N. F. B. Headquarters
2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, Calif.

SEPTEMBER ISSUE--1957

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Published monthly in Braille and distributed free to the blind by the American Brotherhood for the Blind, 257 South Spring Street, Los Angeles 12, California.

Ink-print edition produced and distributed by the National Federation of the Blind, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, California. Subscription rate--\$3.00 per year.

EDITOR: GEORGE CARD, 605 South Few Street, Madison, Wisconsin.

News items should be addressed to the Editor. Changes of address and subscriptions should be sent to the Berkeley headquarters of the National Federation of the Blind.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT	1
2. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS	1
3. POSTAL INQUIRY DROPPED	5
4. THE HELPLESS BLIND	5
5. MISCONCEPTIONS	6
6. BILL TAYLOR GETS THE AXE	8
7. NFB PINS	9
8. A HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT "CLARIFICATION"	9
9. NFB TAPE PROGRAM BEGINS	12
10. ILLINOIS' LOSS-NEVADA'S GAIN	12
11. A RESOLUTION	12
12. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIS MAGAZINE	13
13. A GREAT LOSS	13
14. LEGISLATIVE SUCCESS IN ILLINOIS	14
15. OREGON LEGISLATIVE REPORT	14
16. STATE CONVENTIONS	14
17. HERE AND THERE	16

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
National Federation of the Blind (NFB)

<http://www.archive.org/details/braillemonitors00nati>

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

As many of you know, I was engaged in field work nearly all of the time between mid-February and late June. This, of course, necessitated my turning over my editorial duties to others. The May and June issues contained only a few items which were mine. I had no part in the preparation of the July number. Last month I wrote the account of the New Orleans convention but the rest of the material was prepared by others. Much of the writing during this four-month period was of the highest excellence and I should have been proud to have been its author. The fact remains, however, that I was *not* the author and I think you should know this. I have received a number of letters containing undeserved compliments and a few of the other kind. I have only now had the privilege of reading Dr. tenBroek's brilliant and devastating analysis of the AAWB resolution and the American Foundation attack on our "Right to Organize" bill. If any of you missed this section, for heaven's sake go back and read it right now. It is a superlative bit of writing and it will make you rejoice if you are a member of an organization which has such a leader and spokesman.

It is my hope that in the future, whenever I am away and others prepare *The Braille Monitor*, they will use their own by-lines. George Card.

* * * * *

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

It is worth while pointing out that, before the resolution endorsing S-2411 was enthusiastically and unanimously adopted by the New Orleans Convention of the NFB, it was read and thoroughly discussed. The procedure at the Chicago convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind presents an illuminating contrast. The resolution was presented to the convention together with several innocuous courtesy resolutions, (thanking the Boy Scouts, the hotel, etc.) Bill Taylor, of Pennsylvania, moved that the S. 2411 resolution be dealt with separately but was not permitted. S. 2411 was not read to the delegates, although its reading would have taken only a minute and a quarter. Bill was given three minutes to present his views but he was hooted and jeered by those who did not want the delegates to hear both sides. Bill reports that the AAWB members present were simply told that the Kennedy bill was bad and that the resolution condemning it was good and that they then obediently adopted the latter without knowing what was in the former. Bill also reports, however, that many of those present refrained from voting and later expressed shocked amazement at the way the thing had been handled. This, he says, was particularly true with respect to the Canadian members, who often keep out of what they consider strictly American policy discussions but rarely hesitate to express their opinions in private.

Bill Taylor plans to supply the entire mailing list of the AAWB with the text of S. 2411 and with Senator Kennedy's remarks on introducing it. When the rank and file members have had a chance to study the bill itself and have come to realize that their organization has gone on record against what is essentially an expression of simple, basic, elementary American rights, a good many of them will be aghast. I have been a member of the AAWB for some years and have attended the national conventions whenever possible. I know scores of rank and file members personally and I know they are not at all in sympathy with the policies of the little clique which now dominates their organization. While their national association is so organized that no individual outside the inner circle has any real voice in

shaping policy, and while open opposition to the party line might put some of their jobs in jeopardy, I predict that Senator Kennedy, Congressman Baring and many other members of Congress will receive strongly dissenting opinions from these humbler members of the American Association of Workers for the Blind.

If anything had been needed to convince Senator Kennedy of the necessity for this piece of legislation, the violent and at times, hysterical opposition manifested by some agency personnel has certainly supplied it. It is reported that a deputation, made up of Dr. Francis Cummings, Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind; Mr. Hulen C. Walker, legislative representative of the Foundation in Washington, (and now president of the AAWB); and Mr. George Keene, an official of the Brooklyn Industrial Home for the Blind, called at Senator Kennedy's office to remonstrate with him over his sponsorship of S. 2411. A member of Senator Kennedy's staff is reported to have said that their presentation was so illogical and absurdly anomalous that they achieved exactly the opposite of what they had intended. The Senator is said to have been deeply shocked by a statement attributed to Mr. Keene to the effect that while employees of the IHB had a right to become members of the NFB he would fire them if they did so.

The mail received at Senator Kennedy's office during late July and early August on the subject of S. 2411 has been so tremendous that even the stenographers have been astounded. Ninety-nine percent of it is reported to have been in favor of S. 2411. Mr. Archibald was told by a member of the office staff that Senator Kennedy has been so impressed by the quality, as well as the quantity of this mail that he has been reading a great deal of it personally. More than three hundred letters, cards and telegrams came out of Milwaukee alone, and this is typical of the whole country. The blind people of the United States have made their voices heard as never before.

Below are several examples of the type of letters which have so impressed the Massachusetts Senator:

(From Durward McDaniel, Oklahoma, NFB Board member) "Dear Senator Kennedy: I have just read the astounding resolution passed by the American Association of Workers for the Blind on July 12th, 1957 and the Bulletin and Special Release which were recently issued by the American Foundation for the Blind. I have been directly associated with organizations of the blind in Texas, North Carolina and in other States where the rights of blind persons have been interfered with by employees of agencies receiving Federal funds. I know that the practical need exists for S. 2411. If this legislative need had not been already well documented, these pronouncements of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind would in themselves provide the positive and conclusive proof that the rights of blind people are in need of protection. It is my opinion that these statements by these two organizations were conceived in anger arising from their guilty knowledge and their desire to continue their interference in the activities of blind people who seek independent self-expression and self-determination. However, it

would not be fair to generalize about the attitudes and intentions of all professional workers. Many professional workers will not join the American Association of Workers for the Blind, and some of those who are members do not agree with its extreme policies. I know of no professional worker for the blind in Oklahoma who attended the recent convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, although they do have a few numbers in this state. I find the objections raised by these two organizations to be rather amusing because they are so clearly not the real objection. I look forward to a public hearing on S. 2411 and to its ultimate enactment into law. This achievement will be one of singular importance in the emergence of blind people as a group into a new and rightful status in our society. I commend you for your authorship of this progressive measure, and I know that thousands of blind people in this state and nation appreciate what you are doing."

(From Walter McDonald, Georgia, NFB Board Member) "Dear Senator: . . . I wish to express to you my personal gratitude for the interest and understanding which you have displayed in furthering the cause of organizations of the blind in the introduction of S. 2411. To you and those not familiar with the history of organizational work 'for the blind' it must seem rather incongruous to have national organizations ostensibly dedicated to the alleviation of blindness to openly oppose your bill but even though it is an anomalous situation, it is very easy to explain and to understand. We who subscribe to the philosophy that the blind people themselves are best able to solve the problems of blindness are running counter to the vested interest of the professional 'workers for the blind'. Those parasitical social do-gooders have lived in ease and comfort out of the generosity and abundant kindness of the American public through the simple device of perpetuating the stereotyped concept of blindness as synonymous to mendicancy. I realize that there are many sincere dedicated individuals in this so-called work for the blind but however sincere, they are misguided and . . . these 'agencies for the blind' are doing the blind a great disservice and injustice. The audacity displayed by these agencies in openly opposing legislation that would recognize the 'right of the blind' to organize reveals the true interest of these professional do-gooders and their determination to hang on to the public teat of human kindness at all cost. In the name of all the blind people of all the States of this great United States, I commend you for your action in introducing S. 2411 and urge you to press for its passage."

(From Jack Murphey, deaf-blind St. Louisan) "Dear Senator Kennedy: You are doubtless aware by now that a multitude of blind citizens were shocked and aroused by the decision of the American Association of Workers for the Blind to oppose your bill, S. 2411. We recognize this attack on S. 2411 as an inexcusable campaign to deprive us of part of our American Heritage and thus silence our demand for a voice in decisions vitally concerning the blind, and render impotent our protest against official inertia, incompetence and intolerance. Thank God we have you for a tried and true friend, Senator Kennedy. May you be unperturbed by the wiles and prestige of our opponents as you lead us to victory in this

crisis.

"I am sure it is needless to dwell here upon the shameful paradox of rich and powerful agencies for the blind striving to persuade Congress to downgrade blind citizens whom the agencies are supposed to serve and elevate. It might be helpful, though, to consider the totally different economic significance of blindness in the lives of sightless employees of agencies for the blind and sightless workers in other fields of endeavor. Therein lies the basic cause for this controversy.

"Many agency jobs are open to blind applicants only. This is right and reasonable. Nevertheless, it is a complete reversal of conditions normally encountered by sightless job hunters. Too often these agency openings are filled by young, inexperienced college graduates or newly blinded adults (with the right connections) regardless of their interest in, or competence to evaluate, the problems and potentialities of blind clients. Thus a substantial number of people who have not even enrolled in the real life of the blind, become agency employees and start ministering to our needs.

"Worthy or not, the blind employee of an agency, whatever his rank, is pretty sure to know that his prestige and earning power would be drastically reduced if he lost his job and had to seek employment in the competitive labor market where blindness is anything but an asset. He also knows that he is on the elevator marked 'up', if he can please the right people. And sad to say, the higher he rises the easier it is for him to forget that the blindness of others gave rise to his job; that his own blindness enabled him to get the job; and that his salary is paid by taxpayers or private philanthropists to enable him to work for the betterment of the blind. It seems to be no trick at all to proceed from there to the conviction that he himself has overcome the handicap of blindness and knows better than his less resourceful contemporaries what is good for them. If they don't agree, have Congress muzzle them.

"The employment problem is quite different for the visually handicapped who are not agency workers. Many of us never get a job; a considerable number with the help of the agencies, win to partial self-support; still others earn a living wage in factories, offices or personal enterprises, and some (including the prominent leaders of our movement to organize and work for the advancement of the blind and have notable success in business, the civil service, law, teaching politics and other fields).

"To us, blindness is not an open sesame to a job with a future. Successful members of our group must carve out their careers on the basis of individual worth in the competitive sighted community. They learn from bitter experience about the prejudice against hiring blind workers. They learn that a blind person must strive harder than his opposite sighted number to accomplish a given task. They rejoice over the magical power of generous public assistance to combat the needless hardships of blindness when its victims can't earn enough to pay for the myriad appliances and services which have become near-necessities of life in our industrial society. In short, they know the meaning of the challenge of blindness, and feel compassion for those who are inadequate to deal with it. They don't think that the lives

of their less progressive fellows should be arbitrarily circumscribed. They say: 'There but for the grace of God go I'.

"So the fundamental differences between the agencies for the blind and the rest of us are these: blindness is an economic asset to the former, a liability to the latter; agency workers succeed because of blindness, our successes are chalked up in spite of it; agencies distinguish between what is good for themselves and what is good for the masses of the blind, we make no distinction; the agencies tend to become despotic, we are democratic--small wonder they wish to keep us weak and disorganized.

"May the law makers of the freest democracy on earth testify to our rights as American citizens by passing S. 2411."

* * * * *

POSTAL INQUIRY DROPPED

In July, 1956, the U. S. Post Office issued a summons and complaint against Federated Industries, of St. Louis, alleging that the sales letter and the other literature sent through the mails in behalf of the National Federation in connection with the greeting card mailings contained fraudulent misrepresentations. The proceedings dragged on for many months, the hearing--(originally scheduled for August 12, 1956)--being postponed again and again. Finally, early last spring, the National Federation was granted the right to intervene as a party-defendant--over the strong protest of the official who had initiated the original action. After that happened the official requested a conference with the attorneys representing Federated Industries and the National Federation in order to arrange a compromise settlement. Early last May both parties-defendant signed an agreement which stipulated that the sales letter would continue to state the exact amount which the Federation realized on the sale of each box of greeting cards, that the Federation would continue to be responsible for all statements made in the literature and that the literature would henceforth contain a clarifying statement to the effect that there are other national organizations "concerned with programs for the blind." Finally, on August 1, 1957, the postal official who had started it all accepted the agreement and notified the hearing examiner that he wished the hearing to be indefinitely postponed.

While this action did not, in any sense, constitute an approval by the postal authorities, it was certainly a tacit admission that no law or postal regulation was being violated and that the Post Office had no case.

* * * * *

THE HELPLESS BLIND

Several years ago Dr. tenBroek wrote: "Every time we try to make a list of the jobs which blind persons cannot perform we find some blind person performing one of them."

One of the more impressive American superhighways is the great toll road running from New York City to Buffalo and beyond, more than four hundred miles. At each of its many entrances and exits mileage tickets are issued and collected. These are all assembled in the system's headquarters office at Albany and fed into a huge multi-unit electronic brain--a member of the univac family--which does an enormously complicated job of computation. Each of the machine's units is about the size of a twenty cubic foot freezer. One of the highly skilled operators of this univac is Mr. James Stephens, 619 Myrtle Avenue, Albany, who is totally blind and who got this job himself. Mr. Stephens is also an enthusiastic golfer and an active member of our new NFB chapter--which is called the Tri-City Council of the Blind and which will include members from Troy and Schenectady, as well as from Albany and its suburbs.

A letter from Bonnie (Sarah E.) Walker of Hermosa Beach, California: "Dear Dr. tenBroek: I am most happy to comply with your request and send you details about my job and how I secured it. Before I entered this world of darkness, I was a thermo-plastic fabricator at Douglas Aircraft. After I lost my vision, I went over to the employment office armed with a list of the jobs I could still do that pertained to my old work. Of course, the interviewer was most sympathetic and desirous of helping me but--then came the usual endless theme of excuses. So I told him that if he would not let me do any of those jobs I knew of one job in the plant that was just made for a blind person and one where I could not possibly get hurt, it being plant broadcast. He capitulated. This division of Douglas covers an area about one and one-fourth miles in diameter. It has fifteen buildings. The broadcast system reaches all areas through its 2665 speakers. A series of zoning switches make it possible to broadcast to a selected area or to all points at once. The requests for broadcasts come in over the telephone. Of our 26,000 employees, six hundred fifty-five are permitted to use the system. Of course, I had a Braille copy of this authorized list. I keep a Braille record of the calls as they come in so that people can call back if they were in a particularly noisy area and missed what I said. I have to turn in a typewritten report each day listing the name of the calling party and his department number and the name of the party being called; the purpose of this controlled use of the system being to cure indiscriminate use of it which would defeat the purpose of having a means of emergency communication. Under this method of control I have between three hundred and three hundred fifty calls in a day . . . I have been on this job for five years now and if I could see, the monotony of it would be devastating, but as it is this feeling is entirely submerged by my deep gratitude for the opportunity to earn my own living, and it is my fervent prayer that this information in the hands of the National Federation of the Blind will lead to the placement of other blind persons in similar work."

MISCONCEPTIONS

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of twelve articles prepared by three of the militant young leaders of one of our St. Louis, Missouri chapters. These authors have taken very seriously the proposition that one of the chief functions of the National Federation,

and of all its affiliates, is to carry on a continuous, relentless campaign of education in order to extirpate from the minds of the sighted those persistent misconceptions about blindness which have resulted--and still result--in social ostracism and the denial of economic opportunity to the blind. The entire series was published in one of the big St. Louis dailies and received a great deal of attention. I propose to reproduce these articles in successive issues of *The Braille Monitor* for a number of reasons. 1. The articles are extremely well written. 2. A good many of our own blind people can stand a little education. 3. It is hoped that many readers of this magazine will become inspired to obtain similar publicity in their own areas. The authors grant full permission to use all, or any part of this material.

The principal author is Mr. Jack Murphey, who is one of the most brilliant deaf-blind persons to be found anywhere today. His resourceful and highly intelligent wife, Alma, who is herself totally blind, has devised a system of communication so ingenious and so efficient that she is able to relay to her husband every word spoken in his presence. This makes it possible for Jack to participate in all discussions and he does this so well that strangers are not aware of his deafness. Dr. tenBroek recently wrote to the Murpheys, stating that the Federation had been missing a good bet by not availing itself fully of the talents of the team but that this was to be corrected at once. The third collaborator in the writing of the present series is David Krause, president of RITE, whom many of us believe is destined to rise high in the NFB.

I. THE MEANING OF BLINDNESS

It is not easy for the uninitiated to grasp the true meaning of blindness because without seeming to do so, sight tends to steal the show from the other senses. Using his marvelous eyes not only whenever necessary, but whenever possible, one is seldom content to hear of smell or feel without actually trying to see the object that attracted his attention. Nor is he likely to dress in the dark or shave without consulting a mirror, or do the simplest arithmetic without using pencil and paper. Sight permeates everything he does! Naturally, this lavish (though perfectly reasonable) dependence upon one faculty helps to obscure the efficiency of the others, and leads to the formation of distorted conceptions of the meaning of blindness.

Probably the most common of these distorted views, and the least defensible, is the one which assumes that being blind is like living in the dark. Often used by propagandists to dramatize in the hope of prying open reluctant purses, this theory hasn't a leg to stand on. Darkness can reduce sighted people to near helplessness, yet it cannot impair the efficiency of the blind in any way. Strictly speaking, you see, blindness is a challenge to meet every problem of life without even being able to perceive darkness--or light.

Defined as lack of sight, blindness is at worst an affliction, at best a handicap, and always a nuisance--always; rather like being unable to start the car when you are late for an engagement; like climbing a slippery hill and sliding back a portion of each yard you ascend;

like being obliged to make innumerable detours while your rivals are favored with a clear road. Given the right environment, adequate training, initiative, determination, patience, and luck, you may surmount such obstacles but the odds are against you--and laxness and pessimism mean failure. So it is with a blind person; he must expend more effort or daring or thought or tact or money--or something--than the same achievement would cost him if he could see.

So let us try to remember that blindness is neither a synonym for darkness nor a justification for shirking. Let us also bear in mind that, while it disqualifies one "To trace the stars and search the heavens for power", and bars one from many another priceless thrill and skill to which sight holds the key, the true meaning of blindness is not to be found in the limitations imposed by lack of sight, but in the individual's adjustment thereto. To those who bow beneath its weight, blindness is a great affliction; to those who accept this challenge, it is a variable handicap.

* * * * *

BILL TAYLOR GETS THE AXE

The following is an excerpt from a leading article which appeared recently in the Chester (Pennsylvania) *Times*, under the caption, "Taylor's Ouster from Blind Post Called Shocking:" Ouster of Media's blind attorney, William Taylor, Jr., from the Pennsylvania Council for the Blind has stirred up a scorpions' den of protests here. Leading the fight against replacement of Taylor is Frank Lugiano, president of the 5,000-member Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind.

Lugiano, in a letter to Governor Leader, wrote in "shocked protest" against the appointment of Leonard Stacey of Duquesne, who replaced Taylor, a member for more than fifteen years. He blamed the switch on Welfare Secretary Harry Shapiro and George Danth, director of the State Council for the Blind, who, he said, have been angered by Taylor's "exposures of incompetency and waste in the management of Council funds resulting in meagre benefits to the blind." Lugiano indicated that the recent action in removing Taylor from the Council stemmed from a suit brought late last year by the attorney on behalf of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind against Shapiro, who by nature of his office is executive officer of the Council. Shapiro, Taylor claimed in the suit, refused to call the Council into session "with sufficient frequency to cope with the many phases of the work of the Council," It met only once during two years, he said. As a result it has "become confused and demoralized" to a point where it is "incompetent" to give the services to the blind, despite "ample funds" provided by the State and Federal Governments, it was charged. . . .

* * * * *

NFB PINS

An adequate stock of the beautiful little gold NFB emblems, a few of which were on display at the New Orleans Convention and were snapped up so eagerly, is now available and may be ordered from the national headquarters, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, California. The Convention voted to price these emblems at one dollar and fifty cents. Their cost is seventy-five cents and the profit will go into the NFB Endowment Fund. They may be obtained with either a pin or a button on the back.

* * * * *

A HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT "CLARIFICATION"

The exchange of correspondence reproduced below, between the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the President of the National Federation is of very great importance and interest at this time. As Dr. tenBroek points out, the Secretary appears to be announcing at least two new and highly gratifying Department policies.

"June 28, 1957

"Dear Mr. tenBroek:

"At your request and in accordance with our discussion on June 13, 1957, I am happy to comment on the memorandum you left with me and sincerely hope that these comments may clarify some of the questions you raise.

"First, you ask that I announce a policy that will protect organizations of the blind from interference by any officer or employee of this Department. I certainly would not condone interference by any of our employees and have no knowledge of any instance in which this has occurred. Our officials work with many organizations. These organizations may in many cases approve of our policies and programs; in other cases they may be critical of our programs and seek changes. Under any circumstances our task as public officials is to give the same service and cooperation to all groups.

"You further requested that I set forth a policy calling for consultation with leaders of organizations of the blind 'to guide (the) Department in its formulation, administration and investigation of programs relating to the blind'. The Department, as a matter of standard policy, consults with interested organizations, including those of the blind, in the formulation of sound policies in developing and administering the programs of the Department. We make maximum use of the advice received from a variety of organizations consistent with our responsibilities under the laws we are charged with administering. We expect to continue this practice in order that we may have maximum participation of

interested parties.

"You requested also that I 'modify the policy of (this) Department whereby the Department has announced to State agencies that they are free to interfere with organizations of the blind.' There has been no such announcement, since there is no such policy. We, of course, will take appropriate action if and when State agencies violate Federal statutes or regulations but it would be presumptuous of me, a Federal official, to interfere with State officials, as you suggest, because of their attitudes toward various organizations or any given organization. This is purely a State matter.

"Your final request is that I withdraw my support of the proposed legislation to create a twenty-one-member Presidential Commission to study the problems and needs of blind persons. In its place you recommend a three-man Commission for this purpose. As I pointed out to you in our conference, I have already recommended the legislation to the Congress. It is the considered view of this Department that such a twenty-one-member Commission, carrying out the provisions of the proposed bill, would make a most valuable contribution in developing sound plans for the future. I cannot agree that a three-man Commission such as you suggest is preferable since our Department has so many programs and interests in connection with the blind which should find expression in the membership of such a Commission. These programs include vocational rehabilitation of the blind, disability insurance for totally and permanently disabled blind, public assistance for blind persons, research into medical problems of the blind including cause and treatment of blindness through our National Institute of Health, education of blind persons, and a variety of other programs with which you are familiar.

"I want to assure you that our Department will do everything possible to aid in assisting the blind in their efforts to improve services and programs.

"I appreciated your coming to talk over your views with me. Please extend my greeting to your members, with best wishes for a successful annual meeting."

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) M. B. Folsom
Secretary

August 8, 1957

"Dear Mr. Secretary:

"May I express to you the appreciation of the National Federation of the Blind for your letter of June 28 in response to our conference of June 13 and the memorandum which we left with you at that time.

"We are pleased with the positive statement that you 'certainly would not condone interference' by any of your employees with organizations of the blind. I believe this to be the first clear enunciation of this policy. In view of the attack presently being made upon organizations of the blind by some professional workers for the blind holding important positions in State and private agencies, the announcement of this policy at this time is significant and will certainly be helpful to your employees as a guide to their conduct. For this reason we sincerely hope and earnestly request that you take appropriate action to announce your position to the employees of your Department in Vocational Rehabilitation and Public Assistance offices throughout the country.

"We are also greatly pleased with your statement that you would have it a standard policy of your Department to consult with organizations of the blind in the formulation, development and administration of departmental programs for the blind. This again, it seems to me, constitutes an announcement of a new policy. Authorized representatives of organizations of the blind have been consulted by officials in your Department only on rare and exceptional occasions in the past. The enunciation of your position in respect to this matter should bring about a substantially greater degree of consultation in the future. Again it is respectfully suggested and urgently requested that this standard policy should be implemented by an appropriate instruction to officers and employees of your Department.

"In respect to the freedom of State agencies to engage in activities that interfere with organizations of the blind, we note with pleasure that you deny vigorously that your Department has announced any policy that would allow such State Agencies any such freedom. We take it that that letter of the Director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation written to an editor of the *All-Story* Braille Magazine under date of May 13, and widely circulated among rehabilitation workers, expressed a personal conclusion and not a Departmental policy. In that letter the Director said: 'State agencies are free to develop their own views with respect to the organizations of blind people in their own interest'. In view of the wide circulation among State agencies of the Director's letter, it is again urgent that your policy in this regard be widely announced in case some of the State workers may have received the wrong impression.

"We note also that you question your authority to take action that would prevent the State agencies from interfering with organizations of the blind. In view of the policy that you have adopted to prevent your own employees from interfering with organizations of the blind, you may be interested in legislation that would afford to you the opportunity to protect organizations of the blind from interference by State agencies and their employees--at least to the extent that such agencies are using for such purposes federally derived funds distributed through your Department. In this connection, may I draw your attention to S. 2411 introduced recently by Senator John F. Kennedy.

"Because of the significance of your letter, I am making arrangements for its publication in *The Braille Monitor*."

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Jacobus tenBroek
President

P. S. "We would of course appreciate copies of any announcements or instructions you might issue giving notice of or implementing the policies expressed in your letter."

* * * * *

NFB TAPE PROGRAM BEGINS

From the July 22, 1957 *NFB Bulletin*: "A lending library of tape recordings, designed to give as wide coverage as possible to National Federation news and activities, is presently in process of development. Tapes will be available shortly for two-week loan, without charge, to affiliated clubs, chapters, or members of the National Federation of the Blind. The first tape recordings available will cover the 1957 national Convention, either in whole or in part (selected speeches and reports). The Federation News Section of *The Braille Monitor* (formerly the *All-Story Magazine*) will also be available on tape recording. These recordings may also be purchased at two dollars a tape. Address request to National Headquarters, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, California.

* * * * *

ILLINOIS' LOSS--NEVADA'S GAIN

George Magers, of Springfield, Illinois, highly regarded young blind rehabilitation counselor, who has been an outstanding leader in the Illinois Federation of the Blind and a delegate at several recent NFB national Conventions, has just been appointed Chief of Rehabilitation Services to the Blind in the State of Nevada. Born in 1920, George attended a one-room country school for three years and then transferred to the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School, Jacksonville, from which he graduated in 1941. He received his Bachelor's degree from Eastern State College in 1945 and his Master's degree from the University of Illinois in 1946. He has been with the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation since July 1, 1946. We feel confident that, under his administration, the Nevada rehabilitation program will eventually merit a nation-wide reputation for excellence such as is now enjoyed by the public assistance program in that State.

* * * * *

A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the directors of State agencies for the blind, in their Denver meeting, openly declared war against the National Federation of the Blind and took concerted action to fight for the suppression of the Federation;

AND WHEREAS, the Iowa Association of the Blind is a loyal and active affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Iowa Association of the Blind assembled in convention at Vinton, Iowa, this ninth day of June, 1957, as follows:

1. That we feel called upon to reaffirm our unqualified loyalty to the National Federation of the Blind, its leadership, and the principles for which it stands.
2. We condemn and deplore the action of the State agency directors in diverting public funds and public manpower into a battle to destroy the very people and the very principles they were created to assist.
3. We recognize that the Federation has fought the battle of the blind on innumerable fronts and that each and every one of us has benefited substantially from its many activities and achievements; that its cause is our cause and that its detractors are our detractors.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIS MAGAZINE

The following contributions were received between July 1, 1956 and July 16, 1957: 1956--July 31, Washington State Association, \$9.78; September 26, Wisconsin Council, \$100; October 29, Nevada Federation (Las Vegas), \$50; October 29, Georgia Federation, \$50; October 29, Peoria District Association (Peoria, Illinois), \$25; October 30, Washington State Association, \$12.25; December 3, Greater Springfield Association (Springfield, Massachusetts), \$5; December 3, Illinois Federation (Peoria, Illinois), \$50; December 3, Colorado Federation (Denver), \$200; December 3, Michigan Federation, \$100. 1957--January 13, Washington State Association, \$36.66, and on February 26, \$11.69; March 15, Arkansas Federation, \$125; March 18, Ohio Council, \$25; April 29, Washington State Association, \$15.55; July 1, National Federation, \$2,000; July 16, Iowa Association, \$50; total, \$2,865.93.

A GREAT LOSS

We were all shocked and grieved to learn of the sudden and totally unexpected death of Gus Zachte, one of the outstanding leaders of our South Dakota affiliate, which took place on May 1. Gus had been an officer of the SDAB and, in collaboration with his sighted wife, Agnes, had edited *The Visually Handicapped Views*, one of the best of the State monthlies. He and Agnes had attended the Omaha and San Francisco Conventions and have

made innumerable friends among the delegates. His passing is a heavy blow both to the State and national organizations. Agnes attended the New Orleans Convention and plans to resume her university studies in the fall.

LEGISLATIVE SUCCESS IN ILLINOIS

In its most recent *Newsletter* the Illinois Federation of the Blind triumphantly announces its most successful legislative effort in many years. Victor Buttram, of Peoria (NFB Board member), who represented the organization at Springfield, is given high praise for his expert lobbying. A bill to create a lien law, affecting all categories receiving public assistance, was decisively beaten. The fight against this measure was carried on singlehandedly by the IFB. After many previous setbacks, passage was at last secured this year of a bill abolishing the ceiling on public assistance payments to the blind. The vending stand law was greatly strengthened. The IFB also secured the enactment of a law which will require physicians and hospitals to report all cases of blindness. House Senate Resolution 44, which requests the Illinois Public Aid Commission to pass on any Federal grants to recipients of public aid, was approved by both houses.

OREGON LEGISLATIVE REPORT

From the *Oregon Council Bulletin*: "Passed by both the House and Senate and signed by Governor Robert D. Holmes, the following bills, sponsored by the Oregon Council of the Blind, have now become a part of the law: H.B. 402--adds two lay members to the Commission for the Blind, including one qualified blind person. H.B. 403--increases the readers and subsistence fund for blind college students from \$500 to \$750 per year and from five to seven years per student. H.B. 438--provides preference for blind as operators of vending stands, snack bars, etc. in State, county, municipal buildings, etc. H.B. 454--provides Social Security benefits for workers at the Oregon Industries for the Blind."

STATE CONVENTIONS

The annual South Dakota convention got under way on June 7 at the Lawler Hotel in Mitchell and adjourned the following day after a busy session. This was not an election year but Howard Hanson, director of the State agency for the blind, was chosen New Orleans delegate. Among the resolutions adopted was one establishing the Gus Zachte Memorial Fund. The Association expressed its determination to resume its vigorous campaign to secure a new site for the State residential school and expressed renewed confidence in the very able superintendent of that school.

On June 8 and 9 the North Dakota Association of the Blind held its annual convention in Fargo. Mr. Merle Kidder, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation in North Dakota, spoke briefly and introduced Mr. Aycock, Chief of the Services for the Blind from Washington, D. C. Mr. Aycock addressed the convention, outlining progress of work done in the field of rehabilitation. This was not an election year but Miss Ada E. Mark, of Lisbon, was chosen as delegate to the national Convention.

The Florida Federation held its fifth annual convention at the New Florida Hotel in Lakeland on June 22 and 23. Tim Seward, Secretary to Congressman Walter S. Baring, of Nevada, and Clyde Ross, NFB second vice-president and president of the Ohio Council of the Blind, were featured speakers. Mr. A. H. Drake, of Tallahassee, was elected president to succeed R. L. Thompson.

On the same week-end the Washington State Association of the Blind met at the Cascadian Hotel in Wenatchee. Mr. Arthur Dunbar, chairman of the newly created Blind Advisory Committee to the Department of Public Welfare, was presented with an engraved Braille watch in recognition of his past services as legislative chairman. The report of the present legislative chairman, Wesley Osborne, covering achievements during the session just ended, was received with great enthusiasm. Arnold Sadler, of Seattle, was elected president, succeeding Lyle von Erichsen, of Spokane who became State treasurer. Mrs. Nora Knight, of Tacoma, was elected delegate to the Boston Convention of the NFB.

No report has yet come in of the summer conventions in Montana and West Virginia. Below is a schedule of State conventions in so far as they are known to this office. Many requests have come in for special notices to the effect that visitors are eagerly desired. Since this applies to *all* State conventions it will not be repeated each time:

Aug. 31-Sept. 1: Tennessee Federation, Memphis, King Cotton
Sept. 20-21: Kentucky Federation, Louisville, Kentucky Hotel
Sept. 21-22: Associated Blind of Mass., Worcester, Bancroft Hotel
Sept. 21-22: Oregon Council, Portland
Sept. 21-22: Missouri Federation, St. Joseph, Hotel Robidoux
Oct. 5-6: No. Carolina Federation, Raleigh, Carolina Hotel
Oct. 11-13: Illinois Federation, Champaign, Inman Hotel
Oct. 11-13: Indiana Council, Gary, Gary Hotel
Oct. 12-13: Arizona Ass'n., Phoenix, Arizona Hotel
Oct. 19-20: Empire State Ass'n., Syracuse, Yates Hotel
Oct. 25-27: Ohio Council, Akron, Sheraton-Mayflower Hotel
Oct. 25-26: Oklahoma Federation, Oklahoma City
Oct. 27: Maryland, Baltimore
Nov. 8-10: Alabama Federation, Montgomery, Whitley Hotel

New Mexico will hold a seminar on Labor Day weekend at a huge Baptist Seminary near Santa Fe. From fifty to one hundred people are expected. The New Mexico Federation is paying one-half board and lodging which will total ten dollars per person and three cents a

mile for persons attending. Allen Jenkins, Durward McDaniel and Paul Kirton will serve on the "faculty".

Dr. tenBroek plans to speak at the conventions in Tennessee, North Carolina, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, Alabama, and possibly in Missouri.

* * * * *

HERE AND THERE

We welcome the appearance of the latest State bulletin to be issued by an organization of the blind--*The Nebraska Observer*. It is being published by the Nebraska Council of the Blind, 4619 St. Paul Avenue, Lincoln. The first issue describes a current legislative program sponsored by the Nebraska blind and announces at least one signal triumph--the raising of the maximum public assistance grant to the blind from eighty dollars to one hundred dollars monthly. We also learn that proceeds from the Omaha White Cane Week drive are being set aside for the purpose of establishing a home for the blind. We congratulate the editor on a lively and most readable first issue.

From the *Minnesota Bulletin* (Braille)--The Organized Blind of Minnesota secured passage of a law during the recent session of the State Legislature which requires that all schools offering teachers' training courses must issue teaching certificates to blind graduates of these courses who are otherwise qualified. This is a real accomplishment and we should all try to secure similar laws in our respective States.

From the *New Beacon*, (British Braille Monthly), "The world famous blind organist, Helmut Walcha, gave a series of concerts and recitals in England before overflow audiences this spring. Dr. Walcha has committed to memory every Bach organ composition which has come down to us--a monumental achievement."

A year ago our Minnesota affiliate suffered an irreparable loss through the sudden death of its great leader, Walter Maine. When Richard Gustafson moved to the State of Washington it lost another dynamic leader. Now comes news of the sudden passing of the beloved Donald Tufts, who had been a key worker for many years.

Two interesting items appear in the June issue of the *Ohio Council of the Blind Bulletin*: (1) Clyde Ross, the president, urges a deluge of letters and telegrams to protest the threatened withdrawal of guide service for home teachers, which would certainly cripple, and perhaps bring an end to the home teaching program in Ohio. (2) "Dr. William H. Havener, Acting Chairman, Ophthalmology Department, University Hospital, Columbus, Ohio, has proposed that any blind person receiving a grant who needs eye surgery be sent to the nearest University Hospital. Ophthalmological students need someone to practice on, so that some day they may become competent surgeons." Clyde calls this "social reform in reverse". Fortunately, he adds, the State Department of Public Welfare is not in sympathy with this outrageous proposal.

The Blind Professional Association of America held its annual meeting in New York City on June 8. Attendance was somewhat smaller than had been anticipated because the Alumni Association of what is now the Perkins School for the Blind met on this same date. Mr. Henry T. Istas was elected president and Dr. Kingsley Price first vice-president. The organization is striving for an early resumption of the publication of the *Blind Professional Review*, which had to be suspended after the death of its editor, Dr. Michael Geffner.

In a complete reversal of its former position, the Bureau of Internal Revenue has now ruled that all expenses involved in the sending of severely handicapped children to special schools, (including tuition, maintenance, etc.) will be allowed as deductible items when making out Federal income tax returns.

From the *Michigan Eye Opener*: "Recordings for the Blind, Inc., 745 Fifth Avenue, New York City, announces an interesting innovation in their services for blind students and the adult blind. This private organization . . . has for the past several years recorded otherwise inaccessible material for blind readers using 'soundscriber' discs which can be played back on the new model Talking Book machines. Up to the present time, all recorded texts have been at the standard thirty-three and one-third speed. Well over 2,000 books are now available for free loan. The change in the embossing procedure will see new books recorded at R. P. M. sixteen and two-thirds. The obvious advantage of economy, only half the number of discs being necessary, is added to convenience for the reader, having to change discs only half as often. An inexpensive adapter is now available through the organization permitting use of standard record playing machines in playback of these discs. Soundscriber records are made of thin, flexible plastic and are six inches in diameter."

From the *New Beacon* (British): "The main building of the Center in Warsaw, Poland, which came into use about a year ago, houses a library and reading room, concert hall, the offices of the Central and Regional Committees of the Union of the Blind, and a Braille printing house. The printing house is staffed by thirty-five workers, of whom eighteen are blind. Every month up to seven hundred bound volumes, 2,000 pamphlets, 1,000 copies of a monthly magazine, and two hundred copies of each of two fortnightlies for young people are produced. The library at present houses 5,000 Braille works of various kinds, as well as over 1,200 volumes of music and seven hundred periodicals . . . at the rear of the main building, work has begun on the erection of an educational and production center, while on the street frontage a four-department vocational school (metal work, machine knitting, tuning and massage), two hostels and a rehabilitation center will shortly be built.

In addition to the annual publicity in May during White Cane Week, the Kentucky Federation of the Blind prepared a booklet containing pictures and appropriate material to promote the employment opportunities for the blind in business and industry. Approximately 13,000 copies of the booklet were mailed on May 13 and 14 and additional copies are to be distributed by the members of the Federation.

On March 12, 1957 the State Board of Education appointed Mr. L. P. Howser to be Superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind. Mr. Howser had served as principal

since 1949 and as acting superintendent since the retirement of Paul J. Langan last October.

Belatedly *The Braille Monitor* salutes the *Matilda Ziegler Magazine* and the *New Outlook for the Blind* on the occasion of their respective fiftieth anniversaries, which occurred within a few days of each other earlier this year.

From the *Oregon Council Bulletin*: "A 'dry-storage' eye bank for preserving corneas to be used for transplant operations is one of the new techniques under study by the Army Ocular Research Unit at Walter Reed Hospital. With this system, the donated cornea is dehydrated and stored several weeks before being used in transplant operations. A vacuum process is being employed for storing the cornea after water has been extracted from the tissues. Formerly, it was necessary to use a transplanted cornea within a few hours because of the deterioration process which starts almost immediately."

"A hydrogen bomb, exploded last May, was responsible for permanently blinding two men who couldn't resist the temptation to watch the spectacle. The men were one hundred eighty miles distant from the target islet of Namu, a small Bikini atoll. Disregarding orders to cover their eyes, they watched the bright flash. Suffering no apparent ill effects for a while, by supertime they were completely blind."

On May 12 Dr. tenBroek wrote Stanhope Pier, Oregon legislative chairman, in part: "Far from being discouraged I think you are to be congratulated and given a great deal of praise for your accomplishments in the Oregon Legislature. Many a more experienced hand with many years' work at a State legislature could take pride and satisfaction in the number of bills you got through . . ."

From the *Iowa Bulletin*: On July 1, Mr. Malcolm Jasper, former assistant director of the Kansas Commission for the Blind, took over as director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. Mr. Jasper takes the place of Mrs. Ethel T. Holmes, who retired on her seventy-fourth birthday.

George D. Paton, superintendent of the school at Vinton from 1909 to 1918, passed away at his home in Des Moines on Sunday, June 2nd.

The Iowa Legislature failed to appropriate matching funds and this State is now one of the few which cannot take advantage of the new and more liberal Federal money for medical aid.

The Florida Legislature unanimously adopted a resolution recommending that State, county and municipal authorities prepare a list of jobs which can be performed by properly qualified blind persons.

Joe Abel, president of our Arizona affiliate, is one of the most successful blind switchboard operators in the whole country. After coming to Tuscon from Peoria, Illinois he secured his job through his own efforts. A few months ago he persuaded his employers to

make a moving picture showing Joe actually performing his duties. This film was sent to A. L. Archibald and the latter found it of tremendous help in convincing civil service authorities that a great many Federal switchboard jobs could be performed by blind persons.

I had the privilege of representing the NFB at a breakfast meeting of the National Committee for Research in Ophthalmology and Blindness held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on June 4. Mr. Archibald and I attended a two-day conference on Sheltered Workshops in Atlantic City on June 10 and 11.

The retirement on April 10 of Donald Gillis Patterson, Chief of the Division for the Blind, Library of Congress, ended a thirty-five-year career of public service.

From the *Oregon Council Bulletin*: "Stanley Gillis, president of the Multnomah Chapter in Portland, passed away on Tuesday, June 4th. . . His presence will be greatly missed by all of us who knew him."

A sixth chapter was added to the Lone Star State Federation of the Blind (Texas) when an organization was formed in Abilene a few weeks ago. Mr. David Pardue, (whom I met last February and by whom I was greatly impressed) became the first Abilene president.

Two new chapters came into existence in Vermont just before the national Convention. They are in Burlington and Montpelier. Added to the original chapter at Rutland, our lusty infant, the Vermont Council of the Blind, now has three small but vigorous chapters.

* * * * *

